لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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Fath 1355 — December 1976

EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

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The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

(For inland correspondents)
Nazir Islah-o-Irshad,
Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya,
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(For foreign correspondents)
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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF ISLAM

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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EDITOR
M. G. AHMAD

Contributing Editor
NAFIS-UR-RAHMAN A. G. SOOFI

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REALITY OF REVELATION

The Promised Messeah (peace be on him)

CHAPTER I

Regarding people who sometimes have dreams or inspirations which are fulfilled, but who do not have any ralationship with God of any significance; who do not have any share of the Light which is vouchsafed to those having a link with God, and whose worldly Self is far away from the Light divine, and thus fails to effect a connection with it.

Let it be known, that as the object underlying man's creation is that he should recognize his Creator, and that in professing faith in the existence and attributes of God, he should attain to a point of certainty, God has fashioned the human brain so as, on the one hand, to have bestowed upon it the

quality of reason which enables man to look upon the Creation of God Almighty, and by probing to the bottom the delicate evidence of perfect divine wisdom in every particle of the universe and reaching down to the significance of the consummate order to be found in the scheme of the cosmos, to attain, with full insight, to an understanding of the fact, that this huge machinery of the earth and heaven cannot exist without a creator ; rather there must indeed be a creator ; and, on the other, man has been endowed with a spiritual sense and with spiritual qualities, in order that these may make up for the defects and deficiencies in the realization of God, which are the consequence of the operation merely of the quality of reason. For, obviously, the latter, by themselves, cannot lead to a full appreciation of God Almighty, the reason being, that intellectual powers, with which man has been gifted, go only thus far, that they declare, after looking upon the things of the universe, or upon the firmness and perfection of the order to be found in their organization, that there must be a creator of this universe full of wisdom, and embodying so many truths. It is not for these powers to declare that that Creator DOES in reality exist, Evidently, however. unless man's knowledge attains to a point where one can make the realization that such a Creator does exist, his being cognisant of a mere "necessity" of a Creator connot be styled "realization" of the complete and perfect verity. The declaration that there MUST be a Creator cannot be on a footing of equality with the declaration that the Creator, whose necessity has been rationally admitted, DOES in reality exist. Therefore for the seekers of truth, in order that they might bring up their spiritual quest to the stage of completion and in order that the natural demand, which is inherent in their natures, for attaining a degree of perfection in their realization of God, may be justified, there remains the need, that, besides intellectual powers, they should have bestowed upon them spiritual powers as well, so that, when these spiritual powers are bought into operation, and there is nothing to obstruct the vision, they should be able to make visible the

Face of the True Beloved with a clearness with which mere intellectual powers connot reveal His Face. The Kind and compassionate God, therefore, just as He has caused human nature to hunger and thirst after His full realization, so, He has, in order to make him reach this stage of full realisation of Himself, bestowed upon man powers of two kinds:

(1) Intellectual powers which originate in the brain, and (2) Spiritual powers whose source is the Heart. The degree of clearness of these powers depends upon the clearness of the mind. What cannot be discovered by the power of the intellect, is proved to its reality by the Spiritual powers. These spiritual powers have in them only receptive qualities, i.e. they develop a clearness such that the bounties of the Bountiful God are reflected in them. For these it is essential that they should be ready to receive divine bounty; there should be no veil or obstruction in between, so that they might have the blessing of a perfect realisation of the Divine Being. This realisation should not stop short merely at this, that there MUST be a CREATOR of this universe, so wisely constitued; rather, these powers should have the boon of divine communication, and being witnesses of His great signs, should be able to see His Face, and to observe with the eye of certainty that that Creator DOES really exist. But, as most people's spiritual make-up is not free from an intervening "veil"; and as greed for the world, and feelings of pride and contempt, and conceit, hypocrisy, selfishness, and low morals, and deliberate default or hesitancy in carrying out the duties owed to God and to mankind, and wilfully turning away from the course of sincerity and steadfastness, and from the fine relationships of love and loyalty and deliberate "boycott" of God Almighty, as all these evils are to be found in most people,—such natures, on account of the intervention of various "veils", hesitations and obstructions and because of physical appetites and desires are not fit for the bestowal of the valuable gift of divine communion which is part of the Light and blessing

vouchsafed to one accepted in the eyes of God.* The eternal bounty of God, however, which would not allow waste of human nature, has placed in most individuals, by way of a seed, the divine custom that infrequently they experience true dreams and true inspirations, so that they might know that there is a way open for them to go forward.

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But, in their dreams and inspirations, there are no signs of divine acceptance, of divine love, or grace; nor are such people cleansed of low desires. They experience dreams so that they might have a reason for professing faith in the truth of God's holy prophets, for, if they were totally shut out of an understanding of the real significance of true dreams and true inspirations—if they had not had, in this field, knowledge, having the quality of firm conviction—they could hold forth to God the excuse that they had not been able to understand the very significance of prophethood, for they were totally uninitiated into this field. They could say that they were entirely unaware of the phenomenon of prophethood, for no example had been furnished to their natures, by means of which they could understand it, and so, they could not unravel the mystery underlying

*It is to be noticed that physical appetites and desires are to be found also in the prophets and messengers of God; but, there is this difference, that these holy personages first tear themselves away from all desire and appetite in order to obtain the approval of God Almighty; they "slaughter" their self before God and then, what they had abjured for the sake of God, is returned to them in the form of Grace; they are subjected to all sorts of afflictions but they do not waver. Those, however, who do not kill their Self for God Almighty, their desire becomes like a "veil" for them, and, at last, like the worm in the dirt, die in uncleanliness, so, their example, as compared with the holy ones of God, is like the gaol wherin live both the warder and the prisoner,—and no one can say that the Warder is the same as the prisoner.

that phenomenon. Thus, the divine practice, from the beginning of the world, has been that ordinary people, apart from whether they are good or bad, pious or sinners, whether professing a true religion or false, are made to experience, to some extent, specimens of true dreams or inspirations, in order that belief or conjecture derived from mere tradition or hearsay, might develop into a conviction derived from intimate knowledge,* and that they might have in their persons a handy specimen that might contribute their spiritual advancement.

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To achieve this object, the Wise God has so fashioned the human brain, and has vouchsafed to man such spiritual powers as can make him see dreams which are fulfilled and which can render him capable of receiving true inspirations. But these true dreams or true inspirations are not an indication of any spiritual dignity or greatness. They are, rather, mere examples, and pointers to the way to spiritual development. If there is anything that is implied by them, it is only this, that such a one is possessed of a correct disposition, provided, he is not carried away to an ignominious end by physical desire. Such a nature is deemed to be capable of progressive development in the spiritual field, provided there is no intevening "veil" or obstruction. An example of it is of a piece of land, under which, we know that there is a store of water, but, that, such water is under the weight of many layers of earth, being mixed with mud of great many varieties, and the clear, sweet, drinkable, water cannot be drawn out without putting in adquate labour, to dig up the earth, for a number of days. It is, therefore, the height of foolishness and misfortune to suppose

*Knowledge is of three kinds: (1) *Ilm-ul-Yaqeen* i e. belief based on mere information, e.g. belief about the existence of a fire, derived from seeing from a distance smoke rising form it; (2) *Ain-ul-Yaqeen*: belief derived from seeing the fire with one's own eyes; (3) *Haqq-ul-Yaqeen* belief derived from actual physical touch with, and feeling the heat of, the flames.

that the highest of human acquirements in the spiritual field terminates with the stage where one might have experience of a true dream or a true inspiration. There are, on the other hand, many more requirements and conditions for spiritual excellence, and so long as these are not substantiated in one's spiritual make-up, these dreams and inspirations are to be regarded as having been meant as a mere "trial" from God Almighty. May all spiritual way-farers be protected against their harmful potentialities!

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Anyone desirous of having an experience of inspiration should herein note that divine revelation is of two kinds: *Wahi-ul-ibtila* i.e. revelation meant as a "trial" and, *Wahi-ul ist'fa*, i.e. revelation meant for "self-purification." Revelation by way of "trial", sometimes, becomes the cause of one's perdition: the fall of Bal-am was due to that very cause. A person enjoying the gift of "self-purifying" revelation however, does not suffer any fall from grace. Revelation meant as a "trial", too, is not everyon's fortune to have, for, there are people (as, in the physical world a child is born dumb and deaf, or blind) whose spiritual qualities are as it were non-existent, and just as the blind can carry on by the guiding hand of others, these people do the same. Owing to universal evidence, however, there is no room for them to deny the truth of the phenomenon of revelation. They cannot say that all people are "blind" like them. A blind man, it would be observed cannot legitimately maintain that those who can see are guilty of a lie when they claim to be possessed of the power of vision, nor can a blind man deny that though he may be deprived of vision, thousand of others have eyes to see; for he is aware that people make use of their eyes, and accomplish tasks which he cannot accomplish. If, however, sometime only blind people were inhabiting the world, and there was not a single individual having the gift of eyes, then, if there was an argument that at a certain time in the past only people with sight were born into this world, the blind would have ample

occasion to deny and dispute the proposition ; rather, it seems to me that the blind disputants would have won the debate, for he who cites the past, but is unable to bring forward, in the present, proof of human qualities and of spiritual excellence, to which he lays a claim, and who avers that these spiritual qualities or potentialities are not to be found in the present or the future but that they have been left behind in the past, such a one, on the test of inquiry or investigation would be found only to be a liar. The reason is that when the Bountiful God, vouchsafed to the physical nature of man qualities like those of seeing, of the ability to hear, the sense of taste, touch, memory and the power to think, to be found, up to the present day, in human individuals — how can it be imagined that the spiritual qualities possessed by men in the past, have now disappeared, notwithstaning the fact that these qualities are more essential for the full development of the human—self ? And how can one make such a denial when one's observation proves that they have not become extinct ? This would show how remote such religions are from truth. They admit that the physical and intellectual potentialities of man are today the same as they were in the past, but they deny that spiritual qualities are to be found in man even today as they were used to be found in former times.

Our object in setting out this discourse is to point out that anyone's having had some experience of true dreams or of true inspirations is no reason that one be credited with any spiritual excellence, unless there are along with such experience, other indications, which, God willing, we shall set out in Chapter III. The phenomenon in this stage is the outcome only of a peculiar cast of the brain, and, therefore, it is not conditioned by the necessity of one's being good or a pious person, nor is it necessary that one should be a Muslim or even a man of faith. Just as, by reason only of the peculiar cast of the brain, some people have experience of true dreams, or they have some information by way inspiration, so, by reason of

the peculiar cast of the brain, some natures have in them a certain aptitude for experiencing true spiritual phenomen ; fine spiritual suggestions occur to them. Such people, however, are apt examples of the authentic tradition :

امن شعره و کمر قلبه

i.e. "while his tongu is a believer, his heart is an unbeliever."* That is why, it is not given to every simple individual to recognize a truthful claimant. Alas ! "many a devil has the face of a man" So let no one stoop to profess allegiance and put his hand into the hands of all and sundry. It should also be noted that the dreams or inspirations experienced by people in this stage are shrouded in a thick pall of darkness. Rarely, if ever, have they any gleam of truth. They are not marked by any sign of the Love or acceptance of God. If they are given any information about the unseen, millions of people share such an experience with them. Anyone, so minded, could make an inquiry for himself, that such dreams or inspirations are shared in by every sinner, disbeliever, or heretical person, nay even by an adulteress. So he would not be a wise man who would be glad, or be beside himself, merely with some experience of dreams or inspirations of this kind. He who would pretend to have attained anything, on the score of his experience of dreams or inspirations of this stage, is the victim of great self-deception. It should rather be noted that the man in this

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* (Compiler's Note)

This tradition relates to Abu Samar Umayya bin Ali ali Millat Saqfi a poet in the Holy Prophet's time. He believed in one God, and gave an excellent exposition of the idea of divine unity in his compositions. Due to jealousy, however, he did not declare his faith in the Holy Prophet ; rather he longed to be prophet himself. As the Holy Prophet repeated his couplets immersed in the concept of one God, he would say : "His tongue (verse) is a 'believer', his heart is an 'unbeliever'."

Tarikh Adab Arbi by Ustad Ahmad Husan Ziyat.

stage is like one who, in a dark night sees smoke rising from a fire, but who cannot see the light emitted thereform, nor can he make himself warm in body or mind with it. That is why such people do not have a share of God's special blessing and favours—they show no sign of divine acceptance; they have not the least bit of a link with God, nor does the Flame of divine Light burn up in them the dross of animality. As they have not yet forged a true friendship with God, and have not yet attained to a station of nearness to the gracious God, they have Satan as their companion,—promptings of the physical Self have the upper hand on them As, when clouds crowd around and the sun remains mostly hidden, only an edge of it, now and then, comes into view, so, they, too, mostly remain in darkness and their dreams and inspirations suffer from intrusions of the devil.

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CHAPTER II

Regarding people who sometimes have dreams which are fulfilled, or who have true inspirations, who have a relationship with God, but not in any great measures, whose worldly self has not been consumed by the flame of Divine Light, though it enjoys a certain proximity to it.

There are to be found in this world people who, in a limited sense, choose for themselves the way of purity and righteousness, nevertheless, ... although they have a natural aptitude for the reception of clear visions, their mental make-up being such that they are given specimens of dreams and visions, and, although, they also try to effect a reformation in themselves, and qualities of goodness and a truth of a superficial character, are born in them, by which to a limited extent, light of true visions and accurate revelations issues forth from them... these dreams and visions are not free from an element of dark-

ness. Some of their prayers even are accepted, but not works of glory, for their piety and truth is not yet perfect ; it is rather like water which is transparent or clear, on the surface, to the eye, but is chocked with dung and dirt at bottom. And as their righteousness is imperfect, their steadfastness and clarity of spirit are to a large extent defetive, they are apt to falter at times of trial. If, however, they are accompanied by God's mercy, if God's attribute of forgiveness safeguards the screen which hides their private lapses, they pass out of the world without any mishap, but if a trial confronts them, there is the danger, lest they should come to a bad end, like the end of Balam, and lest being recipients of divine inspiration, they be likened to a dog, for, on account of defects, of knowledge and faith, the satan takes his stand at their door, and the moment they trip he immediately enters their "house". Such people are able to spot the light from a distance, but are not able to go right into it nor do they have any share of its warmth. They are in a codition of danger. God is "Light", as the Divine declaration says :

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الله نور السموات و الارض

i.e., Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth." So, he who preceives only the ancillary effects of this "light", is like one who sees smoke arising from a distance but who does not see the light given out by the fire. He is thus bereft of the benefit of light, as also of its warmth which burns up the dross of human weaknesses. Hence, those who rely on mere reason or on inspiration of a doubtful character as arguments for a belief in the existense of God as, for instance, teachers of religions who are devoid of spiritual sense, or philosophers, or people who, only by their spiritual capabilities, that is, by the capability to experience waking visions or dreams, put their belief in the existence of God, while they are devoid of the light which is part of those who enjoy a place of nearness to the Divine Being—are like one who sees from a distance smoke rising from a fire but who does not see its light, and thus, seeing the smoke, comes

to believe in the existence of the fire. Such a one is deprived of the spiritual insight which can be acquired through the agency of Light; He who sees the light of divine effulgence from a distance but who does not go into it, such a one is like him who, on a dark night sees the light emitted by the fire, whereby he is guided to the right path, but, owing to the intervening distance, cannot make use of the fire to get rid of the cold, nor can the fire burn up his worldly self. On a dark night, when it is extremely cold, if light from a fire is seen by someone, mere seeing of that light will not save one from the deadly effects of the cold. Only he would be saved who goes up sufficiently close to the fire so as to rid him of the cold feeling. The distinguishing mark of one who only sees this light from a distance, is, that, he is not blessed with any mark of special Divine grace, though some indications, of his being on the right path, are to be found in him. Such a one's cramped spiritual state which is the result of lack of reliance on God and of the presence of worldly desire is not got rid of; his worldly self is not burnt to ashes, for he is far away from the flame of light. He is not a full heir to the Prophets and Messengers of God. Some of his inner dirt lies hidden within him, and his connection with God is immature and not free from turbidity, for, though he sees God with a dim vision from a distance, yet he is not in the lap of God. The worldly desires lying within such people, sometimes intrude like a rising storm, into their dreams, and they imagine that the storm comes from God Almighty, whereas, it is the creation merely of their evil self. For instance, a man may have a dream in which he sees himself saying, he will never submit to a certain person, that he was a better person than that man, and from this he concludes that he is really a superior person to that other. But, such a declaration is the result only of selfish conceit. Likewise, on account of the rising storm of self, he makes utterances of many kinds and, in his ignorance, believes as if these utterances accord with the Divine will, but he is spiritually condemned thereby. In as-

much as he had not made a proper advance towards God, and had not accepted Him with all his might, and with all sincerity and faith, he is not blessed with a full measure of Divine grace. He is like a child, which though viable, has not yet emerged from the embryonic membrances, whose eye is still closed against a fuller vision of the spiritual universe; he has not yet seen the face even of his mother in whose womb he had been developing. As is the proverb "A half learned divine is a danger to one's faith", he is in a dangerous state on account of his defective knowledge of the Divine Being. Nevertheless, such people do have some knowledge of spiritual phenomen and of truth, but this is comparable only to milk which is polluted with a small quantity of urine, or like the water which contains some filth. As a man in this category, in comparison with one belonging to the first category, though somewhat safeguarded in his dreams and inspirations, against intrusion of the Satan or of an evil suggestion from the self, yet as he still has in him a certain Satanic influence, he is not immune to Satanic revelations. And, as emotions issuing from his evil self still cling to him, he is not safeguarded against suggestions of the self. The truth of the matter is, that the high quality of clearness of Divine revelation and of inspirations is bound up with the clarity of the self; whosoever has his self yet soiled with dirt, in howsoever slight a measure, has his experience of divine revelation or inspiration, still spoiled by an admixture of filth.

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CHAPTER III

Regarding people who receive revelations from God, of the completest and clearest type, who are graced with Divine Cammunion and address in a full measure, who experience dreams which are true and clear like the early dawn, who have a connection of love with God; which is of the

perfectest and completest character, who forge an entrance into the Love Divine, and whose worldly self is consumed in the flame of the Divine Light.

Let it be known that God Almighty is extremely kind and Merciful. Whoever turns, to Him with truth and sincerity, He deals with him with greater truth and sincerity; he who advances towards Him with sincerity of heart is never wasted. God Almighty possesses high attributes of Love, Loyalty, Bountifulness, Kindness, and the ability to enact extraordinary divine events. But these are fully evident only to him who is fully absorbed in His love. Though He is extremely Kind and Merciful, yet, He is Independent and has no need for any person or thing. Therefore, he who annihilates himself in His way, achieves true life; and who loses everything for Him gets heavenly reward.

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Those who establish a perfect connection with God Almighty are like him who, having seen the light of fire from a distance, goes near it, till he introduces himself into the fire, burning up thereby his entire physical frame, only fire being life behind. The man with the perfect connection with God, thus approaches near and near to God, till his entire self is in the midst of the fire of Divine Love, and his worldly self burns to ashes in the Flame of Divine Light, being totally replaced by Fire. This is the climax of the blessed love between man and God. The principal sign of a perfect connection with God Almighty is, that Divine attributes manifest themselves in such a person; low morals, the outcome of human weakness, are burnt up by the flame of Divine Light, and a new individual is born, a new life comes into existence, which is totally different from the earlier life. And, just as a piece of iron, when put into the fire, and when effects of the fire predominate in its substance, the iron is transformed into fire, yet one cannot say that it is fire, though it manifests qualities of fire, so, he whom the flame of Divine love envelops from head to foot, becomes a manifestor of the Divine Light, but

one cannot say that he is God : he is only a man whom the fire has enveloped all around. When this fire has gained strength a thousand symptoms of the presence of perfect Divine Love arise, not one symptom. lest it should confound a wise seeker of truth ; the Divine relation can be recognised by hundreds of symptoms.*

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Among these is the symptom that the Benevolent God, occasionally, puts forth, from His tongue, His easy, meaningful, and delicious speech which has in it Divine glory, blessing, and the perfect power of divination about the unseen. The speech has a certain brilliance with it, which shows that it is a certain fact and not a matter of doubt. It has in it a divine brightness, it is free from all dross. Very often, this speech consists of some weighty prophecy. The range of his prophecies is very wide, it is universal. These prophecies, in volume and quality, are of a unique character ; no one can bring forward a parallel of them. They are full of Divine Majesty ; accompanied as they are by a perfect manifestation of Divine power, they reveal the Face of God. His prophecies are not like those of astrologers; they contain signs of Divine love and Acceptance ; they are full of Divine Help and support. Some of his propheciss relate to his own self. Some to his offspring, some to his friends, some to his foes, some generally to the whole world and some, to his wives and relations. Facts are revealed to him, which are not revealed to others; doors of the unseen are opened to him, which are not opened to others. God's speech descends upon him, as it descends upon the holy prophets and Messengers off God,...a speech which is certain and free of doubt. He is gifted with such a superiority of tongue, that in volume and quality, a peerless Speech is made to issue from his tongue which is beyond the challenge of any person. His eye is given the power of waking visions, by which he

*A great symptom of this perfect relationship is, that, just as God dominates over everything, so, such a one dominates over his foes and opponents. "Allah has decreed : Most surely I will prevail I and My Messengers."

can discover the most hidden news. Sometimes, written stuff is put before him. He can meet the dead as one can meet the living. Many a time, things, thousands of miles away reveal themselves to his view as if they were in front of him.

Likewise, his ears are given the power to hear voices from the unseen; very often he is able to hear the voices of angels, and in times of distress, he derives consolation from their communications. Strangely enough, sometimes, voices from inanimate objects, plants and animals travel up to him.

The philosopher who denies the Hannanah* is ignorant of the spiritual faculties of prophets. Again, his nose is given the ability to smell perfume from the unseen. Many a time he is able to "smell" tidings about propitious events, and is able to perceive the bad "smell" of unpleasent phenomena. Of similar import is the power of intuition bestowed upon his mind; many suggestions enter his heart which are fulfilled. Similarly, Satan is unable to dominate him for Satan has no share of his person. Because of the fact that he has annihilated himself in God, his tongue becomes all the time the tongue of God; his hand becomes the hand of God. And, though he may not have had any special gift of inspiration, yet whatever falls from his mouth, does not come from him but from God, for his worldly self becomes completely consumed his worldly existence suffers a death, and he is given a new and holy life which constantly reflects rays of the Divine Light.

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Thus, his forehead is blessed with a certain Light which is not bestowed on anyone except the Lovers of the Divine Being. On some special occasions, this Light is so resplendent that even a disbeliever is able to perceive it, particularly, at times when these people are persecuted, and so they address themselves to God for Divine Help. This is a special moment with them .....the moment of Acceptance in Divine favour, when the Light Divine shines from their forehead.

*See Aypendix

Again, their hands and feet and all their body is blessed, on account of which even the garments they may be wearing become sacred, and very often, the very touch, or contact of their hand, becomes the means of removing one's physical or spiritual imperfections.

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Likewise, God places a blessing in the houses in which they live ; such a house remains protected from calamities—God's angels keep guard on it.

Likewise, a blessing is placed in, and a special treatment is accorded to, their town, or village, and the dust on which they put their feet is hallowed.

Likewise, all the desires of people of this rank assume the aspect of a prophecy, that is to say, when a strong desire arises in them, to eat, or, drink, or put on, or to see, anything, the very desire assumes the manner of a prophecy, and as an insistent desire arises in their minds, the very anticipation of the thing desired brings up the thing itself.

Likewise, their approval, or displeasure has the manner of a prophecy. The strength of their approval or pleasure in relation to any person becomes a tiding of the future eminence of such person ; the strength of their displeasure in relation to anyone becomes an argument for his impending decline and destruction, for, being lost in God, they are within the house of the True God, and their pleasure or displeasure is the pleasure or displeasure of God. This state of theirs is evoked in them, not by the prompting of the self, but is produced by God Himself.

Likewise their prayers or attention is not like the prayers or attention of ordinary people but rather have a strong effect. Provided a calamity is not an unalterable decree of God, if their attention, with all its essentials, devotes itself to the undoing of it, God does away with it, whether it is a single person, or more, or a whole country, or a Sovereign, on whom such calamity falls. The secret of this is that they are dissociated from their physical body, and so, very often, their will

and intention becomes parallel to the Will and Intention of God. Therefore, when their attention strongly engages itself in the doing away of a calamity, when a requisite Acceptance in God's Favour is attained by the longing of a passionate heart, the divine practice is that God listens to them, and so it comes about that God does not reject their prayers. However, sometimes, in order that this might serve as a proof of their being the creatures of God, their prayer is not heard, lest they might be taken by ignorant people to be the equal associates of God. If the calamity has actually fallen and signs of death, as it were have become manifest, the divine practice generally is that the calamity is precipitated. At such a moment, obedience to the divine decree consists in the giving up of prayer by the holy ones of God, and bearing up oneself with patience. Prayer would be well-timed when signs of dejection or pessimism have not yet completely manifested themselves, when symptoms have not yet arisen which clearly show that the calamity is at the door, i.e. in a way it has already fallen, for the divine practice mostly is that when God has made manifest His intention to send down a calamity, He does not withdraw His decree.

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It is an absolute fact that most of the prayers of the Accepted once of God are granted, so much so that their chief miracle is the acceptance of their prayers. When, at a time of distress, they are in severe restlessness, and in this state of extreme worry, they focus their atrention on their God, God listens to them. Their hand becomes at that time the hand as it were of God. God is like a hidden treasure. He reveals His Face through those perfected ones who are accepted in His Favour. God's miraculous signs reveal themselves only when those accepted in His Favour are teased. When they are persecuted to an extreme, one should take it for granted that the sign is near at hand, no at the threshold for they are they the people who in their heart and soul are dedicated to God and whom God loves as no father had ever

loved his child. God enacts His extraordinary deeds for them; He gives proof of His Strength as if a sleeping lion had suddenly woken up. God is hidden and it is these people who reveal Him, He is within a thousand screens, and it is these people who reveal His Face.

It ought to be remembered that the notion that all prayers of the Accepted ones of God are granted is entirely erroneous. On the other hand, the truth is that God's relation with those accepted in His Favour is of a friendly character: sometimes, God grants their prayers, at other times, He requires them to abide by His Decree, as is the case in friendly relations. A friend, at one time, accepts his friend's demands and carries them out according to his friend's desire, but then there comes a time when he wishes to get his own demands accepted by his friend. This is hinted at in the Holy Quran where God holds forth the promise that He would accept the prayers of the Faithful, i.e. ادعونی استجب لکم that is, "Pray to Me and I will grant your prayer", whereas, in another context, He has put forth the teaching that one should be reconciled and pleased with the Destiny which descends from Heaven, as He says:

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و لنبلونکم بشیٔ من الخوف و الجوع و نقص من الاموال

و الانفس و الثمرت ، و بشر الصبرین الذین اذا اصابتهم

مصیبة قالوا انا لله و انا الیه راجعون .

i.e. "And we will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and fruits, but give glad tidings to the patient, who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say 'Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return' ". (2 : 156-157)

So, reading these two verses together will clearly show what is the Divine rule about prayers and what is the mutual relationship between the Creator and the created.

I wish to reapeat lest an ignorant person imagine whatever is stated in this booklet about the perfect-of-faith and

the perfect-in-love, is shared in, in most cases by other people, for the latter too sometimes experience dreams and waking visions, and also have inspirations; what then is the distinction between these two?

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Though I have dealt with these suspicions yet I must say again that there is a great difference between those accepted in the Favour of God and those who do not enjoy that status; which difference has been mentioned in this booklet, and yet in point of heavenly signs, a great difference is this, that the Accepted ones of God, who are immersed in the Light Divine, the dross of whose self is burnt up in the Fire of Love, in all conditions and states whether in degree or quality, are in a dominating position over others; signs of Divine Support and Help, in an extraordinary manner, manifest themselves in their behalf, in such great numbers that no one is able to bring forward the like of them, for as I have already stated, they are the perfect manifestors of the Face of God who is a Being hidden from our eyes! they reveal to the world the hidden God and God reveals them to the people.

I have stated already that there are three kinds of people who share in the signs of heaven, firstly those who have no talents in them, they have no relationship with God Almighty, only on account of their psychic suitability, do they sometimes experience true dreams and true waking visions, which do not indicate any sign of Divine acceptance, or of being favoured with Divine Love; which do not bestow any benefit on their person; thousands of wicked, bad-charactered people, transgressors and sinners, share with them these dreams and inspirations. Notwithstanding these dreams and waking visions, it is frequently noticed, their conduct is not praiseworthy. At the least, the condition of their faith is one of extreme feebleness, so much so, that they will not even bear true witness; they do not fear God as they fear the world; they cannot cut away their connections from wicked people; they do not have the courage to bear true witness when there is

an apprehension that this would displease some big and highly placed person. In affairs of religion, indolence and laziness are to be found in them in an extreme degree. They are immersed, day and night, in worldly concerns. They deliberately support falsehood and relinquish the way of truth. Every step of theirs is dishonest. Moreover, some of them habitually, do not shun a life of sin and transgression. They stoop to all unlawful acts in order to get worldly gain. Morally, some of them are in a very bad state ; they are embodiments of jealousy pettimindeness, conceit and pride ; they are given to acts of meanness of every description, shameful evils of many kinds are to be found in them. It is strange that some of them would experience only evil dreams which of course come true but which show that the make of their brain is such that it is given to bring forth only bad dreams of evil import. Neither for themselves, nor for anyone else, do they see any dreams which are good for themselves, or which improve their worldly interests, or fulfil their personal longings, or which might import good tidings for others. The dreams of such people are comparable with that category of the three physical aspects of a burning fire, which may be described as one in which a man nontices only a cloud of smoke from a distance, but is unable to see the fire or to feel the warmth thereof, for thess people do not enjoy any link with God. In their spiritual experience nothing but "smoke" falls to their lot, from which they do not get any ray of light.

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The second category of the seers of dreams and recipients of inspiration is that of the people who enjoy a connection with God but this connection is not perfect. The dreams or inspirations of these people can be compared to a man having seen, on a dark and severely cold night, the flames of a fire from a distance. Sighting the fire proves to be a boon to him, in this respect, at least, that he avoids walking on uneven ground, on strewn thorns or stones, or which is infested with snakes or ferocious animals. Nevertheless, this amount of light cannot

safeguard him against cold or death. So, if he is unable to reach up to the warm surroundings of the fire, he perishes like a man who walks in the dark.

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The third category of seers of dreams and recipients of inspiration is that of the people, whose dreams and inspirations are comparable to the physical spectacle wherein a man, on a dark and severely cold night not only profits from the light of the fire, by which he can find his way, but, having entered the warm sector, is perfectly safe from the harmful effects of the cold. This stage is reached by those who burn up the cloak of evil passions in the fire of the love of God, who choose a life of bitter austerity for the sake of God. They see death right in front of them, and hasten to take it for themselves. They accept every description of pain and discomfort in the way of God. They become the foes of, and take an antagonistic course to, their own self, rendering proof of such a strength of faith that even the angels wonder at it. They are spiritual fighters and all the onslaughts of Satan prove to be nerveless before their spiritual might. They are true, faithful and sincere, and cannot be misled by the tempting pleasures of the world nor can they be deflected from their true Beloved by the love of offspring or the blissful companionship of their wives. In short, no bitterness can overawe them, no selfish pleasure can stand between them and God, no relationship can interfere with their connection with God.

These are the three degrees on the spiritual scale, of which the first is known as *Ilm-al-Yaqeen* the second *Ain-al-Yaqeen*, and the third blessed and perfect state is called *Haqq-al-Yaqeen*. Man's experience of the realisation of God cannot be perfected, nor can it be purified of dross, so long as it does not reach the state of *Haqq-al-Yaqeen*, for this latter state is not dependent upon mere observation but descends upon the heart as a real experience. In this state, man, having fallen into the raging fire of the Love of God, is bereft completly of his selfish desires. Having reached this state, man's realisation of God transfers

itself from a state of mere verbal declaration about Divine matters to one of real self-experience, one's mundane existence is completely burnt and reduced to ashes. Such a man sits in the lap of God, and, just as, a piece of iron placed in the fire assumes the aspect of fire and thus begins to exhibit qualities of fire, so, a man, in this degree, becomes invested, in the manner of the shadow in its relation to reality, with the attributes of God. He annihilates himself in the Divine Pleasure so completely, that he speaks, sees, hears, and walks, as if it were from within God Himself, as if God Himself is inside his cloak. His humanity is dominated over by Divine manifestations. This is a delicate subject, not within the grasp of ordinary people. I therefore drop it here.

And, a picture of this third category, which is the highest and the most perfect, can also be drawn thus; that the perfect revelation, the third of the three kinds of revelation, which descends upon a spiritually perfect individual, is exemplified by the rays of the sun falling upon a clean mirror which is placed quite opposite to them. It is obvious, that, though sunlight is always the same phenomenon, yet, as it manifests itself in different ways, the quality or manner of its manifestation becomes different, so that, when the rays of the sun fall upon a rough surface of the earth, where there is no clean or transparent water, rather, there is black and dark dust, and the surface too is not plain, the rays would be of a very feeble nature, specially at a time when clouds intervene between the sun and the earth. But when the same ray of light, not obscured by any cloud, falls upon clear water which shines like a polished mirror, then, the same ray of light appears to be ten times brighter so that the eyes cannot tolerate it.

Thus, when revelation descends upon a purified soul which is cleansed of all dross, then, the Divine light of revelation is extraordinarily bright, and the attributes of God fully reflect themselves upon that soul and the full face of the one true God is displayed to one's view. This discussion shows

that just as the light of the sun falls upon every clean or unclean surface, so much so, that even a latrine which is full of dirt takes a share of it, yet, the full benefit of its light is received by a polished mirror or by a clear pool of water which by its perfect purity can focus the picture of the sun within itself. Likewise, God not being a miser, everyone is benefited by His light. But they who suffer their worldly self to die a death, who thus become in a complete measure manifestors of the Divine Being and within whom God Almighty, in a metophoric sense, takes His abode - they are of a different category. You notice, for example, that though the sun is in the sky, yet when its light falls upon clear water or a polished mirror, it appears as if it is inside that water or that mirror. As a matter of fact, however, it is not within that water or that mirror, but the water or the mirror, by its perfect clarity, and by its bright surface, has made it appear to the people as if the sun is within the water or the mirror. In short, it is the self which has purified itself completely and to the highest standard of perfection—it is this self which can receive the light of Divine revelation in a manner which is most perfect and complete. Being recipient merely of inspiration, or having had some experience of dreams, does not connote that one is possessed of any excellence, unless the self, by reason of a perfect transformation, brought about through self-purification, has attained the property of reflection, and unless the face of the True Beloved is visible within it, for, just as the common benevolence the one True God, has, with rare exceptions, bestowed upon everyone the gift of the physical eye, the nose, the ear, the sense of taste, and so many other senses, and, just as, it has not dealt with any people, with niggardliness, so, spiritually speaking, it has not deprived any people, in any age, of the opportunity to see the seed of spiritual powers being sown among them. And just as you see that the light of the sun falls in every nook and corner—no surface, fine or rough, being without it, so, the same law of

nature holds true in the case of the spiritual sun, so that neither a rough, nor a fine surface is without a ray of spiritual light. But, this light loves clean and transparent hearts. When that spiritual sun throws its light upon clean souls it produces in them a manifestation of its full brilliance, so much so, that it draws a picture of itself in them, just as, when the sun throws its light upon clear water or upon a polished mirror, so that the sun is reflected in that clean water or mirror, as it is seen by the eye in the heavens.

So, spiritually speaking, there is no excellence higher than, that man should strive for self-purification so as to picture the image of God within oneself. This is pointed out by the Holy Quran in the verse :

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انی جاعل فی الارض خلیفه

i.e. "I am about to place a vicegerent in earth" (2 : 31). It will be realised that a picture is the *Khalifa* or "successor" shape of the real object and explains the correspondence between the two in respect of the location of the limbs and the facial lines and curves. The holy traditions, as also the Torah, bear out, that God Almighty made man after His own Image. The world Image refers only to a spiritual correspondence. It would be realised also that when, for instance rays of the sun fall upon an ultra-polished mirror what happens is, not merely that the sun can be seen within the mirror, but, rather, also, that the mirror exhibits the qualities of the sun, in that, the light of the sun is reflected to others. This is the condition of the "Image" of the spiritual sun. When a clear heart reproduces a reflected Image of the spiritual sun, rays of light, like the sun itself, issue forth from it and illuminate the sorrundings, as if the whole of the sun, with full majesty has gained an entrance into it.

Herein, there is another point worth remembering, and that is this, that those of the third category who enjoy a perfect relationship with God Almighty, who are the recipients

of a pure and perfect inspiration, do not all enjoy Divine Bounties of the same degree; the scope of their natural capacities, relatively, is not the same, being less in the case of one and, greater in another, still greater in the third, and so great in the case of some other person, that the extent of it is beyond one's comprehenson. The relationship of Love with God Almighty, in the case of one person, may be "strong" in the case of another, "strongest", and in the case of someone else, so strong that the world is unable to recognise it, no intellect can reach up to its height. They are so absorbed in the love of their eternal Beloved that the nerve or fibre of their physical existence is completely disintegrated. People of all these categories, in accordance with the verse

كل فى فلك يسبحون

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i.e. "All of them float in an orbit" (36 : 41), cannot go beyond the circle of their respective natural capacities; no one from among these can have greater measure of light than the limit of his nature, nor can anyone reflect whithin oneself the spiritual picture of the Bright Sun in a greater measure than their natural capacity would warrant. God Almighty, in proportion to one's capacity, reveals His Face to everyone. By reason of the lesser or greater scope of natural capacities, the Face is small here, and large there. For example, *a large* face appears to be very small in a little mirror on a piece of jewellery, but the same face appears to be large in larger mirror. And yet, the mirror, whether large or small, delineates all the lines and features of the face. The only difference is that a small mirror will not reflect the actual size of the face. Therefore, just as there is this difference in the dimensions of the image in a small or large mirror, so, notwithstanding, that the Divine Being is eternal and unchanging, there are variations in the size of His image consistently with the spiritual capacity of the individual, and these variations go to this length, that, in the exhibition of His attributes the God of B is greater than the God of A, and the God of C is

greater than the God of B. God, however. is not three. but one; various manifestations of Him lead to different exhibitions of His glory. For example, the God of Moses, the God of Jesus, and the God of the Holy Prophet (May peace and the blessings of God be upon him) is one and the same God, not three, but, on account of different manifestations, the some one God respectively exhibited three different glories. The spiritual capacity of Moses was limited to the Israel and the Pharaoh ; therefore, manifestation of Divine power on Moses was limited to the extent of his capacity. Had the vision of Moses comprehended the whole of mankind of his own time as well as the future generations, the teaching of the Torah would also not have been so cribbed and confined as it is. So, also, the scope of the spiritual capacity of Jesus was limited to a few tribes of the Jews who were in front of his eyes; with other people, or with the future generations, he had no relation of sympathy, and therefore the matifestation of God's power in his denomination remained circumscribed by Jesus's own spiritual capacity, And as the teaching of the Gospel aimed only at the reformation of the practical and moral evils of the Jews, and as Jesus had not comprehended within his vision the evils of the world at large, the Gospel is unfitted to effect any reformation of a general character, rather it was meant to reform the then existing evils of the Jews of Jesus' time. The Gospel had nothing to do with the people of other lands or with the coming generations. If the Gospel had intended to reform all the various people, and all the different human temperaments, its teaching would not have been what it is. Moreover, it is a matter for regret that on the one hand, the very teaching of the Gospel was defective, on the other, self introduced errors have been responsible for a great harm, in that a human being has been made into a God, and by putting forth the self-conceived doctrine of Atonement, the door has been suddenly shut against all practical reform.

Now the Christian people are involved in a double mis-

fortune ; firstly, they cannot have the succour from Almighty God in the form of inspiration or Divine revelation, for inspiration happens to be sealed up altogether ; secondly, they cannot take a forward step in the sphere of actions because belief in the doctrine of Atonement prevents them from making any practical effort or attempt at reform. But, the vision of the perfect man on whom descended the Holy Quran *was not* limited ; his universal sympathy and concern had no defect, rather, in point of time and of space he had within him the gift of sympathy of the most perfect character. This was the reason why he had, in the most perfect and complete measure, a share of the manifestations of Divine power and he gained the title of the *Khatam-al-Ambiya* (the seal of the Prophets,) not in the sense that there would be no spiritual bounties for the future, but rather in this sense that he holds the seal... without whose impress no spiritual blessings can be attained by anybody. The door of divine communication and address will never be closed to his followers till the day of judgement. Besides him there is no prophet who holds the seal ; it is he alone by whose seal there can be a prophethood for which it is essential to be a follower ; his resolve and sympathy did not wish that his followers be left in a defective state.* He did

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*Here, there naturally arisses a question, namely that among the followers of Moses there have been many prophets, and so, Moses necessarily has a superior rank. The answer to it is that all those prophets were selected directly by God. Moses having no concern in it, but that in the Holy Prophet's (May peace and the blessings of God be upon him) followers, there have been thousands of holy persons, but there is one who is a follower and also a prophet. There can be no parallel example in any prophet of spiritual bounty of this large measure. Apart from the prophets, all the other followers of Moses, generally speaking, were of an immature spirituality. As for these prophets, I have already stated they they did not receive

not tolerate that the door of Divine revelation which is the real basis for the attainment of God-realisation be closed against his followers. In order to perpetuate the mark of the seal of his ministry he wished that the bounty of Divine revelation should be attainable by following him and that the door of Divine revelation should be closed against one who is not his follower. This is the sense in which God has made him *Khatam-al-ambiya* (the seal of the prophets). It therefore stands established till the day of judgement that a man who does not prove himself to be one of his followers by truly following him, who does not consume his whole being in rendering obedience to him...such a man can neither have any experience, till the day of judgement, of a perfect revelation or an inspiration, for, prophethood of an independent character ended with the Holy Prophet (May peace and the blessings of God be upon him), but Zill (subsidiary) prophethood, which means the gaining of revelation thrugh the bounty of the Holy Prophet alone.....this kind of prophethood shall remain till the day of judgement, so that the door of full spiritual development for human being may not be closed and, further, lest the world should lose sight of the fact that the Holy Prophet's high resolve has wished that the door of Divine communication and address should remain open till the day of judgement and that God-realisation which is the means of salvation should not completely disappear.

(Ta be continued)

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anything from Moses, on the other hand, they were made prophets directly. But, from the followers of the Holy Prophet, thousands of people attained to sainthood on account merely of following the Holy Prophet.

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